**Monkton Farleigh Parish Council**

**Minutes**

**Wednesday 10th January 2024**

**7:00 pm at the Village Hall**

Those attending: Zoe Tinkler, Colin and Rachel Exley, Richard Meade, Johnny Kidney, Mike Dawson (Wiltshire Council) and Liz Watts.

Parish Councillors: Ele Warrington (Chair), Jane Ghali (Clerk), Rachael MacDonald, Pauline Adams and Andrew Tucker

1. **Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest**: Apologies: Laura Wallace (PCSO), there were no declarations of interest.
2. **Minutes of Meeting 13th December** **2023** - signed and agreed
3. **Matters Arising** - everything covered on this agenda
4. **Report from Zoe Tinkler – Monkton Farleigh’s Tree Warden**

Community Orchard – chair recommended that Zoe gauges interest in village through the WhatsApp and village noticeboards as orchard would need villagers to commit to planting and maintenance. Zoe to ascertain if village could decide on trees. Zoe to find out and register Monkton Farleigh’s interest in the scheme. **Action: Zoe Tinkler**

1. **Report from Johnny Kidney**

* *Bradford on Avon one way system* – 3 options are being considered.
* The *B3108 will be closed* between Limpley Stoke Road, Winsley and its junction with Murhill overnight on weeknights (7pm -6am) from 26 Feb and 6 March for resurfacing. Access will be maintained for residents/businesses, but possible delays.
* *Shout* – a new service to support young people in Wiltshire struggling with their mental health at school (leading to them avoiding school). Individuals can text WILTS to 85258 to receive free, confidential support via text message. It will not appear on the texter’s bill.
* All 20 *leisure centres* in Wiltshire will be offering *no joining fee membership* deals between 2 January to 15 January. For more information or to become a member, please visit the Council website at: www.wiltshire.gov.uk/leisure-memberships
* *Families with children/young people with special educational needs* and or disabilities (SEND)and those accessing alternative provision are invited to help shape services in the future. Meetings will be held in January across the county and parents, carers, children and young people are all invited to have their say. The face-to-face events will be held on 10 January at Calne Town Hall, 16 January at St John’s Parish Centre Trowbridge and Friday 26 January at Guildhall Salisbury. All events will run from 10am to 1pm. There is a sign-up form on the Wiltshire Council website here - SEND Strategy - Trowbridge -2024/01/16 - 1 - WPCC (wiltshireparentcarercouncil.co.uk).

1. **Hedge planting/transfer of land ownership**

Mike Dawson (Head of Estates & Development, Wiltshire Council) attended to give information and receive questions about the possible transfer of land around and including Farleigh Rise play area.

He said transferring of the freehold was quite simple, but suggested we should employ a solicitor if the PC went ahead to sort out the Land Registry and to read the related documents.

The play area is in poor condition but Wiltshire Council (WC) no longer maintains any play areas in the county. WC has had the play area inspected by RoSPA and it is ‘low risk’ if the play area deteriorates then WC will remove it.

If the land at Farleigh Rise and Broadstones is transferred from WC to MFPC, the MFPC will be given a £2,000 donation, (£1k for each area). However, MFPC would then be responsible for all upkeep of the areas, grass cutting (currently approx. 9x pa), bin emptying, playground maintenance, RoSPA reports, insurance etc

If the land was to be transferred, then WC would place an advert to make sure there were no objections.

If the Parish Council sold the land for housing 50% of the income would go to WC, unless the it was affordable homes.

Please find below some of the information sent by Mike Dawson following the meeting:

**Wiltshire Council delegations in place:**

*Play Area*

The Council give the authority to grant 7-year leases of play areas, based on a template lease, to enable town and parish councils to maintain the play areas or they can do an asset transfer to the parish council.

*Asset transfer to parish councils*

There is delegation to the Head of Estates & Development to transfer community assets to parish councils by way of freehold at nil value. The transfer allows a range of community uses as set out below based on a template agreement:

Community Use: means as at the date of this Transfer [ ] and thereafter any use which is for the benefit of the local community and/or parishioners of [ ] and shall include (but without limitation) cemeteries, parks, recreation areas, playgrounds, public open space, country parks, woodlands, allotments, community halls, sports pitches, sports fields, sports changing rooms and other sports facilities, toilets, affordable housing and provided that the use is ancillary to the main community use the use may also include car parking and facilities for the sale of food and drink.

*Tree planting*

The Council have introduced an ability for town and parish councils to make use of Wiltshire Council’s land for environmental improvements. In that approach the preference for parish councils is freehold transfer as set out above.

*In respect of Farleigh Rise the following questions were asked by MFPC prior to the meeting and responses are:*

 *What happens if the equipment is beyond repair or deemed unsafe*? I understand we still maintain. If unsafe the PC will be approached to see if they are prepared to fund the replacement.  If not the equipment will be removed, or cordoned off to make safe. A copy of the ROSPA inspections for both sites has been provided.

 *Will playgrounds be transferred in good condition?* The play areas will be transferred in their current condition.

 *Would we still offer £1000 if they took on the land, including the play area?* Yes

 *Would we offer any other incentives*? If the PC wished it returned to Public Open Space, we would remove the equipment for the community to use as a recreational area and we will cut the grass monthly.

 *Are there any s106 monies available for the site*? None

 *Is there a date by which playground ownership and management will be devolved to Parish councils?* On completion of the relevant documentation.

 *Will we be able to have an idea of annual running costs?* There will be inspection costs (ROSPA), litter bin emptying and grass cutting. We are not able to provide an estimate of costs moving forward and I have asked for any historic costs. Given budget was removed some years ago the detail will be both historic and not a true comparison of today’s costs.

* Will we be able to access the services that Wiltshire Council use if we wish to*? Yes, but on their commercial rates.

 *Are there any legal fees involved in the transfer of the land*? Legal fees include the solicitor costs to either review the document and/or register the transfer with the Land Registry. In addition, there is a cost of the public open space notice (2 weeks in a local paper), circa £600.

 *Would there be any land registry fees*? Yes, but I cannot advise what they would be.

 *If we own the land will this have to be included in future accounts and what, if any, impact will this have on Parish accounts*? We cannot advise on this, but we would consider the matter to be deminimus for accounting purposes.

 *Will we have to pay rates on the land*? No, the site does not attract business rates.

 *Cost of insurance*? We cannot advise on this and you would need to consult your insurer to determine if current public liability cover covers the sites/activity.

RM suggested that there should be an action group to look into the transfer of ownership of land at Farleigh Rise and Broadstones to consider what costs there would be going forward. This might include providing new play equipment at Farleigh Rise, mowing, emptying bins, maintenance etc. **Action: All PC**

1. **Finances** – At end Dec 23 there was £7,199.37 in the account.
2. **Parish Councillor vacancies** – it was thought that there should be a councillor from Broadstones and another from Farleigh Rise. JG and EW to progress applications. **Action: JG and EW**
3. **Precept for 2024/25** – after some discussion it was agreed to raise Precept application to £10,000 from £9,500. JG to complete forms. **Action JG**
4. **Stiles and access to local footpaths** **update** There was some discussion regarding the footpath adjacent to the Broadstones play area and if it was a public right of way. The stile going into the back entrance of the field is wobbly. EW to speak to the Cotswold Wardens. Some concern about the footpaths that have been churned up through the woods by Inwoods as tree work is undertaken. EW to ask Cotswold Warden’s advice on this matter. **Action EW**
5. **Speed limits update**

Liz Watts gave the meeting an update which had been received from Kirsty Rose in advance of the LHFIG (Local Highway & Footpath Improvement Groups) meeting on 15 January. The estimated costs of the road signs with new speed reductions is £8,500. The PC thought this was very expensive. The PC is likely to have to pay half of this amount, depending on the LHFIG’s contribution. The 2 week consultation won’t start until the TRO (Traffic Regulation Order) has been completed. The costs won’t be agreed until the TRO is completed. Once the signs have been paid for WC will maintain them.

The sign on the A363, also says reduce speed now and is therefore more prevalent. Agreed to pay the outstanding £490 for this sign and the SLOW sign painted on the road **Action JG**

1. **Work for the Parish Steward**

Potholes by Hill Farm House at the junction, Lower Lane, Rushmead Lane and Pinckney Green lanes. Also debris on the lower lanes caused by water and large vehicles driving up on bank. Lots of blocked drains – report on My Wilts. **Action JG**

1. **Correspondence received**

The application for funding part funding has been accepted. Suggested that electricity may come from a street light, PA to check where they are in Pinckney Green. Clerk to contact them to check if defibrillator can be mounted on a post. **Action JG and PA**

1. **Parish Matters**

* PA reported that there were some overhanging trees on the lower road in Pinckney Green. PC replied: If trees are on council land then it can be reported on the MyWilts App (ie 1m in from highway, if in a garden, tress should be dealt with by the owner).
* Steve Calpin will replace backing on noticeboards by the church as they are deteriorating. Steve has said that all boards will need ongoing maintenance. The PC will factor this in to it’s budget. Action JG
* Garden waste is regularly dumped at the entrance to Farleigh Rise. Can report on My Wilts.
* Proposed date for village litter pick Sunday 17 March 2024

1. **Date of Next Meeting** – 28 February 2024. JG to confirm with VH and book future dates. **Action JG**